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MIAMI HERALD

22 May 1986

# CIA studies article on espionage case for legal violation

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The CIA is reviewing an article published Wednesday on the Ronald William Pelton spy case to determine whether to seek prosecution under a law barring disclosure of intelligence secrets, said White House spokesman Larry Speakes.

The Washington Post, in an article concerning secrets that Pelton allegedly sold the Soviet Union for \$35,000, said it had withheld a description of betrayed technology after President Reagan, CIA Director William Casey and other administration officials had urged the newspaper not to publish the material.

Post Executive Editor Benjamin C. Bradlee, asked whether the newspaper had deleted all the material requested by the administration, said: "I am sure we did not. We deleted what we felt appropriate, after discussion."

The article reported that U.S. officials believe that Pelton "compromised a costly, long-running and highly successful U.S. operation that used sophisticated technology to intercept Soviet communications."

A "high-technology device" was used in the operation, which also involved U.S. submarines, it said.

Intelligence expert James Bamford said that the device may have been linked to the SOSUS network with which he said U.S. authorities monitor ship traffic in sensitive waters.

Speakes said the Post article "is presently being analyzed by the CIA to see if they have any specific problems with it. They have not indicated either way."

In a telephone interview, Bradlee said he had received no word on whether the CIA would refer the case to the Justice Department, as it did Monday with an NBC-TV report on the Pelton case.

Casey is asking the department to prosecute NBC under a 1950 law against the disclosure of intelligence gathered through the interception of communications. No news organization has ever been indicted under that law.

CIA spokeswoman Kathy Pherson, asked why the government sought to block publication of material allegedly obtained by the Kremlin, said the agency could not be sure that the information transmitted by Pelton was the same as that collected by Post reporters.

She said she did not know whether Casey would refer the Post report to the Justice Department.

Speakes said that Reagan had telephoned Post publisher Katharine Graham on May 10 "to communicate to her that some of the matters that we were discussing with The Post were very serious and that publication of them would do irreparable harm to our national security."

"We've had conversations with Mrs. Graham and a number of other Post executives and reporters in regard to the story,"

Speakes said.

The Post story said some details about U.S. intelligence had been deleted before publication, although Speakes said that the final version was not reviewed by the White House.